



COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

FIRE DEPARTMENT

1320 NORTH EASTERN AVENUE
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90063-3294
(323) 881-2401

DARYL L. OSBY
FIRE CHIEF
FORESTER & FIRE WARDEN

April 25, 2012

TO: EACH SUPERVISOR

FROM: DARYL L. OSBY, FIRE CHIEF

INMATE FIRE CAMP PROGRAM

This memorandum is to inform your Honorable Board that the Los Angeles County Fire Department (Fire Department) is moving forward with the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department (Sheriff's Department) in a collaborative partnership to supply low risk inmates for the Inmate Fire Camp Program.

In a memorandum dated September 27, 2011 (Attachment A), your Board was informed of the Fire Department's intentions to explore the possibility of this partnership with the Sheriff's Department. Since that notification, both departments have been working on a cost analysis and a memorandum of understanding to transition from California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) inmate fire crews to Sheriff's Department inmate fire crews. The current CDCR agreement with the Fire Department expires on June 30, 2013. However, the agreement can be terminated prior to the expiration date as long as a thirty (30) day notice is provided.

Please be advised that I have discussed these topics with the Chief Executive Office and they are aware of the Fire Department's position on this matter.

However, prior to implementation with the Sheriff's Department, the following three strategic priorities must be addressed:

1. Sustainment Funding for the Inmate Fire Camp Program

The Fire Department currently spends approximately \$12.3 million (Attachment B) on the Inmate Fire Camp Program. Since the CDCR cost offset will be discontinued under the new partnership with the Sheriff's Department, the Fire Department is

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WHITTIER

requesting that your Board consider utilizing AB 109 funding to offset a significant portion of the Fire Department's program costs.

2. One-Time Infrastructure Investment

Additionally, the Fire Department is seeking AB 109 funding to assist with various Capital Projects necessary to maintain the infrastructure at each of the fire camps (Attachment C). In Fiscal Year 2011-12, the Fire Department identified a need for \$3.24 million in Capital Projects for potable water system improvements. Also, the Fire Department has identified other Capital Projects that would be necessary if the program were expanded at each of the facilities (Attachment C). These projects include sleeping area refurbishment, kitchen refurbishment, and bathroom refurbishment to allow these facilities to hold additional inmates. These projects are estimated to cost approximately \$17.5 million.

3. Retaining Camp Holton

The Fire Department is requesting the support of your Board to continue the use of Camp Holton as an inmate fire camp. The location of Camp Holton allows for the timely response of fire crews to some of the most fire prone areas in the County. Their area of response includes areas that have suffered devastating fires in the past (i.e. Station, Sayre, and Griffith Park Fires).

Following the Station Fire, and the turnover at Camp 16, your Board allowed the Fire Department to occupy Camp Holton. A large portion of the plan to utilize Sheriff Department inmates is contingent on the Fire Department remaining at Camp Holton. The camp currently supports 100 inmate fire fighters and can easily be expanded by 40 inmate fire fighters. The Fire Department is working with the Probation Department to ensure our ability to continue to occupy the facility in the future.

If you have any questions, please contact me at (323) 881-6180.

DLO:jt

Attachments

c: William T Fujioka
Brence Culp
Georgia Mattera
Sergio Vasquez
Michelle Cervera
Randi Tahara
Joseph Charney
Susan Nissman
Rick Velasquez
Sussy Nemer



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DARYL L. OSBY
FIRE CHIEF
FORESTER & FIRE WARDEN

September 27, 2011

TO: EACH SUPERVISOR
FROM: DARYL L. OSBY, FIRE CHIEF

DLO

PARTNERSHIP WITH LOS ANGELES COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT FOR INMATE FIRE CAMP PROGRAM

This memorandum is to inform your Honorable Board that the Los Angeles County Fire Department (Fire Department) is exploring a potential partnership with the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department (Sheriff's Department) to provide low risk inmates for the Inmate Fire Camp Program.

Since 1981, the Fire Department has partnered with the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) to provide State inmates for the Inmate Fire Camp Program. The program consists of 24 inmate hand crews operating from five strategically located fire camps throughout the County: Acton, Santa Clarita, San Gabriel Valley, Malibu, and San Fernando Valley. The five inmate fire camps are a cost-effective method of housing and utilizing inmate hand crews to complete conservation projects and assist with wildland fire suppression.

With the adoption of AB 109, the CDCR may no longer be able to provide inmates for the Inmate Fire Camp Program. CDCR is working to revise the camp eligibility classification system, which may allow CDCR to continue providing inmates for the program, but any changes must be approved by the State Legislature and the Governor. Currently, there are no guarantees that these changes will be approved and implemented.

The CDCR has indicated that as a result of AB 109 sentencing changes Statewide, approximately one third of fire camp eligible inmates will now be incarcerated at the local County level. This same review by CDCR also indicated that the County of Los Angeles currently supplies approximately one quarter of all camp eligible inmates throughout the State.

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In order to accommodate the additional inmate population, the Sheriff's Department requires additional bed space. The Fire Department has 485 available beds for the Inmate Fire Camp Program.

The Fire Department and Sheriff's Department have met on several occasions to discuss the possibility of this partnership. The Sheriff's Department is interested; however, a comparison of this program to other possible solutions needs to be completed.

WILDLAND FIRE MISSION

Fire crews are a necessary component of the Fire Department's wildland firefighting arsenal. It is imperative that the Fire Department retain our own fire crews so we are not required to rely on regional resources when the State is experiencing multiple large wildland fires, as was the case in Orange County during the Santiago Fire in 2007, and in San Diego County during the Cedar Fire in 2003.

The use of inmate hand crews during wildland firefighting is an effective extinguishment and control operation because it allows for a coordinated attack. Fire crews complement both engine company and aircraft resources during perimeter control efforts by completing the extinguishment and overhaul much more quickly. The inmate hand crews also allow engine companies to be deployed for structure defense while the inmate hand crews continue with perimeter control efforts, thus keeping fires from rapidly increasing in size.

FISCAL

The Fire Department is currently working with CDCR to adopt and implement a two-year contract which reimburses the Fire Department \$4.8 million annually to support the inmate fire camp operations.

Since the inception of the Inmate Fire Camp Program with CDCR, the contract has funded up to 82% of the salary and employee benefits costs for fire personnel to staff each of the camps. Even though the percentage has fluctuated over the years, based on the State budget and other factors, this is the lowest funding level ever received by the Fire Department.

The most recent reductions in funding occurred in 2009 when the CDCR indicated they had to reduce the funding by \$3.5 million to the current \$4.8 million. CDCR never received budget authority for the full funding and had been utilizing funding set aside for other programs to make up the difference. Although the Fire Department sought to increase the contract funding during the recent negotiations for a new contract, CDCR indicated that due to the current financial climate at the State level, they could not increase the contract amount. Due to the critical nature of the inmate fire crews, the Fire Department has absorbed the reduction in funding by using District funds to cover the loss.

Each Supervisor
September 27, 2011
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If the Fire Department were to partner with the Sheriff's Department, a contract would need to be implemented.

Many of the camp facilities are older and located in remote areas, so the Fire Department is challenged with maintaining an acceptable infrastructure, specifically water quality and septic systems that meet State and local regulations. At Camp 14, which is located north of the Santa Clarita area, the Fire Department recently completed a \$3.5 million project to improve water quality and upgrade the septic system. This fiscal year, the Fire Department has budgeted \$3.9 million to make the same improvements at Camp 19 in San Gabriel Canyon above the City of Azusa.

The Fire Department is working to upgrade sleeping areas at Camp 13, Malibu, and the bathroom facilities at Camp 11, Acton, in the coming fiscal years. These improvements could potentially increase the number of beds at each of these facilities.

SUMMARY

The inmate hand crews are of strategic value during wildland firefighting operations. Therefore, the Fire Department believes it is in the County's best interest to support a partnership with the Sheriff's Department.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact me at (323) 881-6180.

DLO:jc

c: William T Fujioka
Leroy D. Baca, Sheriff
Brence Culp
Sheila Williams
Vicky Santana
Randi Tahara
Joseph Charney
Susan Nissman
Rick Velasquez
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CURRENT OPERATION

Camp	Inmates	Fire Captain	Fire Fighter Specialist	Battalion Chief	Salaries	Indirect Expense Rate	Employee Benefits	Camp Total
11	80	1	9		\$993,173	\$568,452	\$575,857	\$2,137,482
13	100	1	10		\$1,090,709	\$624,278	\$632,409	\$2,347,396
14	80	1	9		\$993,173	\$568,452	\$575,857	\$2,137,482
16	100	1	10		\$1,090,709	\$624,278	\$632,409	\$2,347,396
19	120	2	12		\$1,401,126	\$801,948	\$812,394	\$3,015,468
Supervision				1	\$144,215	\$82,543	\$83,618	\$310,376
Program Totals	480	6	50	1	\$5,713,105	\$3,269,951	\$3,312,544	\$12,295,600

Notes:

Total FY 11/12 IER Overhead (Includes Dept, Bureau and Division Overhead and is applied to salaries only) =

FY 11/12 IER Employee Benefit Rates - Safety =

Fire Captain Monthly Salary (Includes EMT/FFL and Step Variance) =

Fire Fighter Specialist Monthly Salary (Includes EMT/FFL and Step Variance) =

Battalion Chief Monthly Salary (Includes EMT/FFL and Step Variance) =

57.2360%

57.9815%

\$9,611.95

\$8,128.05

\$12,017.90

Camp Locations:

Camp 13 - 1252 Encinal Canyon Road, Malibu, CA 90265

Camp 14 - 35100 San Francisco Canyon Road, Santa Clarita, CA 91390

Camp 16 - 12653 N. Little Tujunga Canyon Road, San Fernando, CA 91342

Camp 19 - 22550 E. Fork Road, Azusa, CA 91702

CAPITAL PROJECTS

Camp	FY 11/12 Projects *			Camp	Future Projects **	
	CP#	Budgeted Capital Projects	Budget Amount		Necessary Capital Projects	Estimated Costs
11	88951	Potable Water System Refurbishment	\$580,000	11	Bathroom Remodel	\$2,000,000
13	88952	Potable Water System Refurbishment	\$300,000	13	Inmate Dorm Replacement	\$3,000,000
					Inmate Dorm Replacement	\$4,000,000
14	88953	Potable Water System Refurbishment	\$784,000	14	Kitchen Remodel	\$2,000,000
					Inmate Dorm Replacement	\$3,000,000
16	89028	Privacy and Access	\$52,000	16	Shower Remodel	\$500,000
19	88954	Potable Water System Refurbishment	\$1,526,000	19	Inmate Dorm Replacement	\$3,000,000
TOTAL			\$3,242,000	\$17,500,000		

* This is included in the 2011-12 Capital Project ACO Budget, with carryover amounts in the 12-13 Budget.

** This represents the Fire Camps' unmet needs.